



HR0714

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2           WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of  
3 Representatives are saddened to learn of the death of one of  
4 the State's most distinguished, respected, and legendary high  
5 school coaches, Mervin "Coach" Baker, of Charleston, who passed  
6 away on October 17, 2009; and

7           WHEREAS, Mervin Chester Baker was born in Landes on  
8 September 25, 1917, a son of the late Martin and Estella (Shaw)  
9 Baker; he married Rebecca Woolford on August 17, 1947 in  
10 Arcola; he received his high school diploma from Buzzard Lab  
11 School and earned his Bachelors, Masters, and Specialist  
12 Degrees from Eastern Illinois State Teachers College; and

13           WHEREAS, He taught and coached in the Illinois communities  
14 of Findlay, Bradley, and Dupo before returning to Charleston  
15 where he taught and coached from 1953 until 1970; he continued  
16 to teach in the school district until 1985 and in 1986 became  
17 the Athletics Director, a position he held until 1995; and

18           WHEREAS, His memberships included the Charleston Athletic  
19 Association, Illinois Athletic Directors Association, National  
20 Interscholastic Athletic Administration Association, Illinois  
21 Coaches Association, Illinois Basketball Coaches Association,  
22 and Eastern Illinois University Alumni Association, serving as

1 its President in 1956; and

2 WHEREAS, He was also one of the founders of organized youth  
3 baseball in Charleston, assisting in the building and  
4 maintaining of five baseball fields, organizing and directing  
5 the Tiny Tots, Tee-Ball, and Minor League baseball programs for  
6 twenty-five years, serving sixteen years on the City of  
7 Charleston Recreational Board with ten years as its Chairman,  
8 organizing and managing a sixteen team High School Basketball  
9 Holiday Tournament at Eastern Illinois University for more than  
10 thirteen years, and coordinating and directing two indoor track  
11 meets at Eastern Illinois University every spring drawing  
12 anywhere from 120 to 135 schools; and

13 WHEREAS, His awards included the Illinois High School  
14 Football Coaches Association Hall of Fame, Illinois Basketball  
15 Coaches Association Hall of Fame, Eastern Illinois University  
16 Hall of Fame, American Softball Association Hall of Fame, Class  
17 "AA" Outstanding Athletic Director from the Illinois High  
18 School Athletic Directors Association, the 1997 Citizen of the  
19 Year presented by the Charleston Area Chamber of Commerce, and  
20 the area's Sports Person of the Century; he was also the  
21 recipient of the Illinois Basketball Coaches Association's  
22 prestigious Buzzy O'Connor Award, and in addition, the  
23 Charleston High School Gym and baseball field are named in his  
24 honor; and

1           WHEREAS, He was preceded in death by his parents; his wife;  
2 his brother, Leo Baker; and his two sisters, Pauline Askins and  
3 Marjorie Schnorf; and

4           WHEREAS, He is survived by his children, Libby Murray and  
5 husband Mike, Jan Baker, and Ken Baker and wife Sandy; his four  
6 grandchildren, Matthew Schubert, Jonathan Schubert, Andrew  
7 Schubert, and Jenny Baker-Sipes and husband John; his two  
8 great-grandchildren, Anna Joy Sipes and Joshua John Baker  
9 Sipes; his sister, Alberta Allen; and his nephews, Steve, Dave,  
10 Marty, and Jim Schnorf and their families; therefore, be it

11           RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
12 NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we  
13 mourn, along with his family, friends, and many players over  
14 the years, the passing of Coach Mervin Baker; and be it further

15           RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
16 presented to the family of Coach Mervin Baker as a symbol of  
17 our sincere sympathy.